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January 24, 2006

Mr. Lester Snow Director Department of Water Resources P.O. Box 942836 Sacramento, CA 94236-0001 JAN 3 1 2006

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RE: South Delta Improvements Program

Dear Director Snow:

Established in 1924, Central City Association (CCA) is L.A.'s premier business advocacy association whose 450 members employ over 300,000 people in the Los Angeles region. CCA supports the Department of Water Resources' (DWR) South Delta Improvements Program (SDIP), a critical water supply, water quality and environmental project designed to meet California's diverse water needs.

Recently, the DWR and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation released a draft Environmental Impact Report/Statements (EIR/S) for SDIP, kicking off an important public review and comment process.

As you know, California is facing a critical challenge. Residential and commercial users need a safe, reliable and high quality water supply to keep up with our rapidly rising population and fast-growing trillion-dollar economy. However, due much in part to our state's arid climate, we have very limited water resources. It is vital that we better utilize our existing water resources and infrastructure; otherwise, we put our communities, farms, environment and businesses at great risk. Two-thirds of California receives its water from the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. Given its importance, we need better ways to manage the Delta's water delivery system, as well as the water itself.

In 2000, the state and federal governments initiated the historic CalFed Bay-Delta Program to manage the Bay-Delta's water resources and eco-system. A unique collaboration of interests supported the plan including environmental organizations, water agencies, business interests, farmers, and state and federal water and fish agencies. SDIP is the next step forward in this long-term planning effort for the Bay-Delta.

SDIP is a responsible and balanced plan to better utilize and integrate our existing water management infrastructure in the Delta. The program will construct seasonal tidal gates to protect fish, and improve water circulation and quality in the Delta, dredge select Delta channels to improve water deliveries for local farmers, and allow State Water Project deliveries to increase modestly – only when needed and environmentally safe to do so.

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Currently, the state is constrained in its ability to use surplus water supplies. We have the infrastructure to move the water, but until SDIP is approved, the state's water managers cannot fully or responsibly use the existing system. SDIP calls for only a 3-5% increase in the average amount of water pumped from the Delta. More significantly, SDIP will provide the flexibility to shift the timing of water deliveries when surplus is available and when environmentally safe to do so. SDIP is an ideal option for California to advance – it will not require building a new project or the construction of major new infrastructure. And, funding for the program has already been secured through passage of voter approved bonds in 2000 (Proposition 13).

CCA is proud to be part of a very diverse coalition that supports the SDIP. That coalition includes water, agriculture, business, planning organizations, and local government officials including the Association of California Water Agencies, State Water Contractors, California Chamber of Commerce, California Business Properties Association and the Western Growers Association.

Water is the lifeblood of California – critical to our families, farms, and businesses. It is our responsibility to use this precious resource wisely through all possible best management practices, including water conservation, recycling and storage, to ensure California's water future.

CCA strongly supports the SDIP and encourages all key stakeholders to help advance this critically needed project.

Regards.

President and CEO